2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanians SG4

A T 525

We remained some days in Diplaik, during which several races were run, resulting on this occasion in favour of the horses of the Araucanians, who won many horses and mares from their neighbours.

A T 525 231

The international sports were diversified by a cock fight between Orkeke's bird, and one belonging to an Araucanian. My assistance was requested to sharpen the spurs, and my friends were much astonished at my indignant refusal to have anything to do with such a proceeding. The Araucanian owner of the cock had also a hen which, during the march, sat upon a clutch of eggs and successfully reared her brood of six chickens, the hen, nest, and all being carefully transported on horseback, and Dame Partlet seeming quite as much at home in the saddle as any Indian mother with her nursling carried in the cradle behind her.

A T 222 137

In the dry lagoons on the western side of the valley the women, and indeed sometimes the men, were frequently engaged in grubbing up an edible root which grew in large quantities. The leaf of the plant is very minute, and the root, which is found about a foot below the surface, varies in length from one to three inches: it is quite white, and about a quarter of an inch in diameter; when raw its taste resembles that of a chestnut, but is rather sweeter. The Indians boil it and drink the water, which is very sweet. During the last two days of our stay we subsisted entirely on this food and fish caught in the stream, as meat was not obtainable. Some of the Tehuelches were here induced for the first time to taste the fish on which Casimiro, Meña, and myself were regaling, and some of them took a great liking to it, and borrowing my lines and hooks were soon sitting on the bank waiting patiently for a bite. They caught several, and towards evening returned with my lines and a share of the fish for us, which we did not require. As I had plenty of hooks, these ingenious savages soon made lines for themselves out of twisted ostrich sinews, and may, for all I know, at the present time be occupied in fishing. The fact that none of these

A T [252]

T 262 226 177

T [227]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanians SG4

Tehuelches would before this touch the fish caught by me, and even expressed great disgust at the idea, is worthy of note, as it has been stated that on the coast they catch and eat sea fish, which could only be alleged by persons ignorant of their real habits of life.*

On the 12th we marched; the cause of our detention for the two extra days being the continued sickness of Crimè, who, however, at length determined to make an effort and proceed, although barely able to sit on his horse. The women followed, more or less, the valley of the river, whilst the hunters ranged over the hills, which on the western side were in most parts free from rock and stones and abounded with ostriches. During the journey I came suddenly on two wild cats, one of which my dog attacked and killed, and the other fell a victim to my bolas. These were of the species common in the provinces of La Plata, and especially in the islands of the Parana. Towards evening we came on another small stream flowing into the main river, into the plain of which we subsequently descended and found the toldos already pitched, literally 'sub tegmine fagi.' During this day's ride, happening to be in the same part of the circle as the Araucanians, we cooked our dinners in company and rode home together. On the way Quintuhual's eldest son, with whom I had always had very friendly relations, said that he desired to recognise me as his brother. So we accordingly joined hands, and riding together formally declared that we were as brothers, and would always remember the duties of our relationship and assist each other, if needs be, in whatever part of the world we might be placed. All this was very satisfactory, and it may be interesting to the reader to know that my sisters and cousins were the good-looking girls who had asked such curious questions at Esgel, and with whom, though we could not understand each other's language, I had always kept up a laughing acquaintance, thereby arousing considerable jealousy in the bosoms of my Tehuelche friends.

* Cf. Guinnard, 'Three Years' Slavery,' p. 73.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SOUTHERN COAST OF THAT REGION OF THE SOUTH COMMONLY CALLED PATAGONIA

The harbor of Santa Elena is a good one for all types of ships and
133 is situated on the 40° line of southern latitude. Sweet water is to be found
only in a glade to the west, filled by the winter rains as they are held by
[312] a ridge which lies across the glade's mouth near the beach. Inland, some
four or five leagues, the Indians reported the presence of some small
[137] springs. All the terrain is rocky except for the small valleys, in which
313] there is good grass and an abundance of espinillo firewood. The Indian
[221] chief who rules this section is called Ayzo; his jurisdiction stretches up
to the harbor of San Gregorio. He said that from the coast westward
toward the mountains there are some 70 leagues of habitable land, but
the land beyond that limit is absolutely uninhabitable by man or beast.
136 Hares are very abundant here, being like small antelope and very good
to eat; quirquinchos, [type of armadillo--Translator] also good eating,
[415] have shells which the Indians use as pans or plates; pumas have flesh
which is very savory, juicy and tender, and is like the roasted breast of
a turkey; there are a few guanacos too, some partridges and many
[262] ostriches. The Indians subsist on all of these, as also on horse meat,
which they have in great abundance and which is their favorite food.
Fish, in which the harbor abounds, is of the kind which we call borriquete
and pejerey, both of which are delicious.

133 The harbor of San Gregorio is situated at 45° 4' latitude south.
It is not very secure and its entrance is bad owing to its rock strewn bot-
tom and weak anchorage. The terrain which surrounds it is rocky and
rugged; one must go inland some 5 leagues [65] before striking water.
The mountain chain is about as far from this harbor as it is from that of
[134] Santa Elena, according to the Indians. This land is even more sterile
[629] than the former. The Indian chief who controls these lands is called
136 Gorgona. The game and fish are the same as in the previous place but
[226] the Indians do not eat the fish since they do not know how to catch them
and lack the necessary implements for doing so. In the cove called
Camarones there is an abundance of shrimp, as there is also in San Julian
and Puerto Deseado, and a kind of fish called gallo; but as already men-
[313] tioned, the Indians do not make use of them. There is here quite a lot
of espinillo firewood, and the rock is very solid and hard.

The gulf of San Jose is south of cape Matas, which is at the same
133 latitude as San Gregorio; from the point at which its mouth begins to
cape Blanco, there are 50 leagues. The northern shores have been ex-
plored by small ships to a point about 40 leagues to the west. There are